hood of the cœliac axis, the cœliac plexus, and semilunar ganglia, and probably the superior mesenteric plexus as well; the affection being set up by secondary processes in the supra-renal bodies, and almost exclusively by tuberculous inflammation in them, this secondary inflammation serving as the medium between the affection of the bodies and that of the sympathetic. Disease of the cœliac plexus occurs independently of mischief to the supra-renal bodies in affections of other organs (case of "Bronze Skin in Disease of the Pancreas," Bell and Fletcher, *Brit. Med. Journ.*, 1857, No. 45), and perhaps, also, spontaneously (case of Köhler's, *Würtemb. Corresp. Bl.*, 1862, Nos. 12 and 13). As far as is known, the affection of the sympathetic depends upon an inflammatory increase in the nerve-fibres and ganglion-cells of the surrounding connective tissue, and the changes resulting, in consequence, in the sympathetic itself and its nervous elements. The only conceivable possibility of recovery in morbus Addisonii would be a retrogressive metamorphosis of the products of inflammation, and a return to the normal state, before the nervous elements have taken any essential and active participation in the process. The affection of the sympathetic is manifested by a paralysis of its vaso-motor fibres, which causes excessive accumulation of blood in the abdominal vessels, and a corresponding emptiness of all parts of the circulatory system outside of the latter. This abnormal blood-distribution causes phenomena more or less resembling those observed in collapse and in anæmia of the nervous centres. The early symptoms of anæmia of the brain are probably obscured by the previous development of a secondary and but little understood blood-alteration, which very probably causes the bronzing of the skin. By far the majority of cases of morbus Addisonii, judging from their generally chronic course, are complicated with diseases of other organs, which, according to their importance, may occasion essential variations in the course, and post-mortem appearances, of individual cases.—*Bienn. Retrosp. of New Sydenham Soc.*, 1871.

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27. *Researches upon the Nature and Origin of Paludal Miasms.*—In examining with the microscope the waters of the Pontine Marshes, those of Meccarebe and of Ostia, M. Bolestra found them filled with infusoria of different species, varying with the condition of the water and the degree of its corruption (Bursariens, Trichodiens, Vorticelliens). But among these beings, those which were more striking by their presence in the waters of these marshes, and always in number proportionate to the extent of their putrefaction, is a little plant, a granular mycrophyte pertaining to a species of the algæ, special and constant in its form, which slightly recalls that of *cactus peruvianus*. It is always mixed with a considerable quantity of little spores of $\frac{1}{1000}$ of a millimetre in diameter—greenish-yellow and transparent—as well as with the sporanges or vesicles containing these spores, $\frac{1}{100}$ to $\frac{3}{100}$ of a milimetre in diameter, and of very characteristic forms.

This alga floats upon the surface of the water; it is iridescent when young, and it gives the appearance of oil-stains. In the low temperature of caves, as well as in water not containing vegetable growths, this alga, with the numerous spores which accompany it, develops itself very slowly. If it is found in contact with air exposed to the rays of the sun and in the presence of plants in a state of decomposition, it grows very fast, and it disengages little gaseous bubbles.

In examining the air of Rome and its environs, Dr. Bolestra found the same spores in proportions varying with the epoch and the season; they were much more abundant at the end of August, and particularly when examined the day succeeding a rain. The number of the spores was much less, however, than when the experiment was made upon water condensed in the atmosphere of the marshes.

M. Bolestra, from the numerous observations which he has made, is led to think that the miasmatic principle of these paludal localities resides in the spores themselves, or in some poisonous principles that they possess. The alga which produces them does not develop in times of great dryness, but it can be produced after a slight rain falling in a warm season, which soon leaves the earth dry that it has moistened; or by heavy dews and thick fogs which rise from the sea and from morasses, as a result of which the detachment and migration of the spores can be effected: the author in this way explains the development of intermittent fever, which, feeble and momentarily suspended in times of dryness, acquires near Rome a great intensity in the months of August and September. If this endemic of paludal fever does not manifest itself in the winter, according to his view, it is less on account of the cold which prevents the vegetation of the alga, in retarding the decomposition of organic substances, than by the abundance of the rains which cover the localities where the spores are found. Their dissemination in the air, which is really possible even in the midst of the water, as has been shown above, is rendered more active in a notable way by the state of dryness of the soil upon which they are deposited. He also explains by the action of the salts of quinia upon these spores, the powerful antimiasmatic virtue of these medicaments.—*Report made to the French Acad. Sciences, Archives Générales*, Sept. 1870. F. P. P.

28. *Ought Persons in whom there is a Tendency towards Mental Aberration to Marry?*—At a recent meeting of the Medico-Psychological Association, the president, Dr. MAUDSLEY, discussed this question, which he said was a most difficult one by reason of the different degrees of liability to insanity which necessarily existed in different individuals. Then, again, the phenomena of atavism and the alternation of neuroses very much complicated the question. For instance, the son of a madman may escape and the grandson be utterly insane; and the offspring of epileptic or neuralgic parents may show very strong tendencies towards insanity. Again, it had been remarked that the offspring of the insane had not unfrequently been men of great genius, and hence the question arose whether, by forbidding the marriage of a man with tendencies towards insanity, we might not be depriving the world of a mind which would more than compensate for innumerable mental aliens. The descendants of the insane are often very original thinkers. They explore the little-trodden paths of knowledge, they have often indomitable energy, and are careless of all obstacles. Dr. Maudsley thought that if a man had actually had an attack of insanity, we ought to use all our powers of persuasion to prevent his marrying, but in other cases he did not recognize the utility of interfering. He thought that not much was to be done for the prevention of insanity by the prohibition of marriage, but that more could be done by the careful and scientific education of the children of the insane. No person predisposed towards insanity should be considered as a helpless victim to his fate. A man can, to a certain extent, by sheer force of his will, make his character grow to the ideal he sets before himself, and, undoubtedly, a great deal is to be done by the careful mental training of those predisposed towards insanity. The insane themselves, it is well known, have at times a great power of control over their actions; and, *à fortiori*, those who are merely predisposed towards insanity should be likewise able to exercise this control. Unfortunately, as a rule, children with an hereditary taint are always worse managed than other children, and are, therefore, doubly cursed.—*The Lancet*, August 12, 1871.

29. *Madness in Animals.*—The *Journal of Mental Science* (July, 1871) contains a highly interesting and instructive paper on this subject, by Dr. W. LAUDER LINDSAY, physician to the Murray Royal Institution (for the Insane). The main object of the paper is to draw attention to what he believes is an easily provable fact, that *much, at least, of the so-called madness of the lower animals is strictly equivalent to what is called insanity in man.* "I do not propose submitting," he says, "the grounds on which I confidently base this assertion. I have elsewhere sufficiently shown, I trust, that *other animals have minds of the same character as that of man;*[1] and I have also fully pointed out that these minds are subject to the same kinds of disturbance or disease as

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[1] In a paper on "The Physiology of Mind in the Lower Animals:" Journal of Mental Science, April, 1871.